



Propagating Tree Roses by Chip Budding

Burling Leong

Budding is the act of placing a detached bud from a rose variety to a selected understock. The cambium layer is the growing layer, which is found between the wood and the bark. Success depends upon joining the cambiums of the stock and the bud. Chip budding is an easier budding method than T-budding for propagating tree rose standards. With a sharp bud knife, well-rooted understock, plumb bud eyes and a steady hand, you can bud your favorite rose any time of the year. Here's how.

SELECTING AND ROOTING AN UNDERSTOCK

Selecting an understock depends on the type of rose you wish to create into a standard. 'Dr. Huey' understock is good for Hybrid Teas and Floribundas because the understock tends to size up to accommodate the large bud eyes. 'Pink Clouds' is the understock best suited for budding tree standards of Polyanthas and Miniatures. Once you have selected the understock, here are the next steps:

TOP: Tree rose in bloom at Hearst Castle, San Simeon, California

LEFT: 'Dr. Huey' understock (*photos by Burling Leong*)





PREPARE THE UNDERSTOCK

The height of the tree rose will determine the length that you will need to cut and root your understock. For example, if you want a 36-inch standard tree rose, you will cut the length of your understock to 42 inches; you will allow 3 inches that can be stuck into soil for rooting. If you are using 'Dr. Huey' understock, you will need to leave at least two eyes to grow at the top.

DE-THORN AND DE-EYE THE UNDERSTOCK

Cut off all thorns and eyes from the understock except for the top two eyes. The understock leaves help to manufacture food until the bud eye starts to grow.

ROOT THE UNDERSTOCK

Use a # 8 strength rooting powder, and stick tree understock into large bands or one-gallon containers. Place the understock under mist inside a greenhouse. Depending on weather conditions, understock will root in approximately three to four weeks.

COLLECTING AND STORING BUD EYES

Collect bud eyes that are plumb or dormant. Do not collect eyes that are leafed out. It is very important to keep bud eyes moist at all times.

Wrap bud eyes in moist paper towels, tuck into a plastic bag, label, and store in a refrigerator until time to bud. Bud eyes will be good for at least two weeks, though it is best to use bud eyes the day that they are collected.



How to Chip Bud

CUT THE UNDERSTOCK

Use a bud knife to make a cut into the bark at a 45-degree angle. The cut should be approximately 3/4 inch in length. Leave a 1/4-inch bark flap at the top of the cut. The flap is to hold the bud eye in place while you wrap the eye with parafilm. For a well-rounded tree rose, bud up to three bud eyes onto the understock.



THIS PAGE, TOP TO BOTTOM: Cutting the bud eye, collecting and storing bud eyes, chip budding at a 45 degree angle (*all photos by Burling Leong*)

OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: A 3/4-inch cut, inserting the bud eye, wrapping with parafilm, the final wrap, early growth



INSERT THE BUD EYE

Cut the bud eye from your bud wood. The bud eye should be the same size as the cut in the understock to match the cambium layers. The bud eye bark can be longer than the chip cut; use the longer piece of bark as a handle to hold as you insert the bud eye under the flap of the understock. Cut off the extra length at bottom of the chip bud cut to match the cambium layers of the understock and the bud eye.

WRAP WITH PARAFILM

Start the strip of parafilm at the top of the chip bud and, holding the parafilm taut, wrap the parafilm around all the cuts. In two to three weeks you will see the healing of the cambium. The parafilm will crack and the bud eye will start to grow and leaf out.



GROW THE TREE ROSE ON AND SHAPE IT

After the bud eye is well established and growing, the understock's two remaining eyes can be cut off. Cut the remaining two eyes at approximately one inch above the budded eye. The bud eye will be forced into growth. To shape the tree rose, pinch the tips of the new growth to force side branches.



SOURCES FOR THIS ARTICLE:

Parafilm: www.2spi.com

Mist heads: www.growerssolution.com

Budding knives: www.frostproof.com



Chip-budded eyes growing (*photo by Burling Leong*)

CHIP BUDDING VERSUS T-BUDDING?

Bud any time of the year—*The main advantage of chip budding over T-budding is that you can bud when you wish.*

Easier to bud—*In T-budding the bark is lifted; in chip budding, no bark is lifted. Thus, it is easier to cut and the bark does not have to slip.*

Easier to match the cambium layer—*Corrections can be made before wrapping the eye by adjusting the bud eye. For example, if the bud eye is too small to match the cut, then it can be corrected by cutting and attaching a larger bud eye.*

BURLING LEONG worked with Ralph Moore at Sequoia Nursery for 35 years, managing all aspects of the operation, including the propagation of roses. Her own nursery, Burlington Rose Nursery, specializes in custom propagation of over 70 different varieties of perennials and ornamentals for a wholesale grower. Her nursery has a large collection of old garden roses, Polyanthas, and Miniatures—both bushes and tree roses, including the collection of early twentieth century roses planted at Hearst Castle in 2008 and others that Hearst Castle will add in the future. Burling assisted in restoring historic roses to the gardens at Hearst Castle and Will Rogers State Park by propagating and custom-budding roses. Email: Burlingl@aol.com